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**Effective:** August 1, 1997

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**96.00 Utility Accommodation**  
**96.01 Definitions**

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**Supersedes:** April 1, 1995

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By: Director, Bureau of Highway Operations

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## A. General Definitions

Unless otherwise provided herein, the definitions accepted by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) shall prevail.

## B. Specific Definitions

### 1. Clear Zone

That portion of the right-of-way free of nontraversable hazards and fixed objects. These areas provide drivers a reasonable opportunity to stop safely or otherwise regain control of their vehicle when it leaves the traveled way. The clear zone generally varies with the type of highway, terrain traversed, road geometrics, and operating conditions.

Chapter 11 of the Department's Facilities Development Manual shall be used as the guide for establishing clear zones.

### 2. Department

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

### 3. Emergency Utility Work

Unforeseen action by a utility deemed necessary to restore an existing utility facility to protect the general public.

### 4. Expressway

A divided highway with limited access control and generally with grade separations at major intersections.

### 5. Freeway

A divided highway with full access control and with grade separations at all intersections.

**B. Specific Definitions (continued)****6. Highway(s)**

The State Trunk Highway system as authorized under Section 84.02, Wisconsin Statutes. This includes the entire area within the highway right-of-way.

- a. Federally marked highways, such as "U.S." or "I", are part of the State Trunk Highway System.
- b. "Connecting Highways" in Section 86.32, Wisconsin Statutes, are actually local jurisdictional streets and not part of the State Trunk Highway System.

***Note: The department's, "Official State Trunk Highway System Maps" denote all connecting highways within Wisconsin. Call (608) 266-2782 for more information.***

**7. Permit**

The document by which the Department grants a utility permission to work within, use, occupy, or cross the highway.

**8. Pipeline**

A utility facility installed to carry or convey a fluid, gas or other material, generally underground, including the casing and the carrier.

**9. Private Utility Facilities**

Facilities which convey or transmit the commodities as defined by utility (see #13), but are owned and operated by an individual(s) or non-utility business and are not accessible to the public.

**10. Responsible Person**

A person having control over a utility project that is not administered by the Department.

**11. Right-of-Way**

A general term denoting acquired interests or rights in land (either all or partial) that are necessary to build, maintain, and operate a highway facility. It is not just a fee interest or a permanent highway interest but encompasses all necessary rights of both a permanent and temporary nature.

**B. Specific Definitions (continued)****12. Traveled Way**

The portion of the roadway for the movement of vehicles which includes auxiliary lanes and ramps but excludes the shoulders. The traveled way usually lies between the edgeline striping.

**13. Utility**

Any corporation, company, individual or association, including their lessees, trustees or receivers, or any sanitary district, cooperative association, town, village or city that owns, operates, manages or controls any plant or fixed equipment within this state for the conveyance of communications, electric power, light, heat, fuel, gas, oil, petroleum products, water, steam, fluids, sewerage, drainage, irrigation, or similar facilities.

The owners or operators of cable television systems, cellular phone and paging (wireless) systems, publicly owned fire or police signal systems, traffic and street lighting facilities or privately owned facilities which perform any of the utility functions above.

**14. Utility Construction**

Any use by a utility of labor or materials to install or to provide for the installation of a new or upgraded utility line or to replace all or a significant portion of an existing line.

**15. Utility Lines****a. Transmission Line**

A utility line with high capacity which generally carries the product from the source to the distribution network.

**b. Distribution Line**

A utility line with moderate capacity which distributes the utility product from a transmission line to points convenient for their customers. An additional term for a distribution line is "trunk".

**c. Service Line**

A utility line which serves a single customer via a connection with a distribution line. Additional terms for a service line include "lateral" and "drop".

**B. Specific Definitions (continued)****16. Utility Maintenance**

Any use by a utility of labor or materials for repairs or replacement of parts of an existing utility line to retain its use as intended, limited to the work types as further defined herein.

**17. Utility Operation**

Any activity by a utility to assure the function of an existing utility for its intended purpose.